

## Bikeway News

Houston Bikeway Program

#### Bikeway Protocol

If you're a first time bicycle rider (perhaps back on the saddle after a long recess) or a renewed walking enthusiast, you will notice there are certain rules of protocol that cyclists and pedestrians follow. It is smart to adopt these courtesies when riding or walking on a multi-use trail,

"Bikeway Protocol"... Continued on page 4.

# Golfman Houston, Bike to Work

Join us for the Houston event to celebrate National Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20, 2005. This event gives us the opportunity to promote cycling as a way to get to work on a local and national level. Organized bike rides to various work sites, rallies, fairs, and many other opportunities to promote cycling in Houston are available. Visit our Web site and let us know how you want to participate: www.houstonbikeways.org

Visit www.bike-to-work.com for riding tips and information.

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Over 2,500 Houstonians participated in the Guaranty Bank Tour de Houston held March 19th. The ride started and ended at City Hall touring historic areas of Houston.

## Tour de Houston

A colorful sea of two-wheelers filled downtown Houston when over twenty-five hundred cyclists participated in the Guaranty Bank Tour de Houston on Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Bill White, Council Member Carol Alvarado, and State Senator Rodney Ellis came together to chair the first City of Houston sponsored event.

The Tour de Houston offered two noncompetitive ride options of 20-mile and 40-mile rides around the downtown area and historic neighborhoods. The ride start was at City Hall. The rides covered The Heights, River Oaks,

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#### **Volunteers**

Where would the Houston Bikeway Program be without volunteers? Definitely not where we are today! Volunteers are the arms and legs of the program. They help us at events, provide us with added resources, and contribute priceless feedback.

Two of our valued volunteers are Beth Hollingsworth and Cheryl Hensley.



Cherly Hensley and her creative photography handywork helps bikeways.

Beth Hollingsworth became a cycling commuter and decided she wanted to be a part of Houston's Bikeway Program to help change the culture of our city. She is an active and creative promoter and applies her writing and editing skills to assist in the creation of copy for the Program. Beth supported us at the Tour de Houston event and is currently researching and helping to develop a bike education course for City of Houston employees. Hundreds of Houstonians have a bikeway network map because Beth put it in their hand. Beth telecommutes and stops by the office once a week to review her task progress. She picks up as many maps as her backpack will allow her to balance on her bike and rides into the sunset at the end of the day with more bikeway maps for Houston.

When asked why she does it, Beth said, "I do this because it's necessary, and fun. It's fun to demonstrate that living without a car is possible in Houston. Whenever I offer people bike maps, the reaction is one of disbelief, then amazement, then overwhelming enthusiasm! It's obvious that they feel that, at last, the city has recognized them as commuters. My position doesn't even pay, and it's STILL the dream job, because I feel I'm having direct positive input into aspects of Thouston living that have concerned me for some time: air quality and

We asked Beth what new cyclists should do. "Revel in the joy of being able to park ANYWHERE!"

Cheryl Hensley called one day and asked, How can I help? She works from home and rides her bike since she moved to town. She recently completed over 60 miles at the Gator Ride. Cheryl has done field monitoring and reporting to let us know the conditions of bikeways in her neighborhood or along her travel route. She provided bright and early help at the Tour de Houston for registration and just about anything that came up during the event. Cheryl has become our roving photographer contributing event and field photos you may have seen in our newsletters and Web site. She also contributes as a member of the Houston Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee. We count on Cheryl, camera in hand, to get great shots documenting cycling history in Houston.

"When I moved within the city limits a couple years ago, I wanted to support political people who shared my beliefs. I became active with the Houston Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and then elected to the Bike Houston's board.

Everyone in life is busy. I believe one person can make a difference. I find the time to dedicate myself to the biking cause. I have met wonderful people along the way. I am inspired by those who have worked diligently before me and hope that I can do the same someday. If you build it, people will ride it."

We thank Beth and Cheryl for their unending energy, their desire to assist, and their persistence to help promote cycling in Houston.

Would you like to volunteer?

Contact us at (713) 837-0003 or visit

Would you like to volunteer? Contact us at (713) 837-0003 or vis www.houstonbikeways.org. Other volunteer positions are available with the City of Houston through the Volunteer Initiatives Program. Visit: http://www.houstontx.gov/volunteer/index.html.



Beth Hollingsworth prepares a load of bikeway maps for her commute home. She knows she'll find someone that needs one.

#### Be a Volunteer!

Traffic counts, outreach projects, technical, creative and professional activities-the opportunities are endless www.houstonbikeways.org

Photo by L. Andi

West University, Southside Place, Montrose, the Museum District, Rice University, the Texas Medical Center, Hermann Park, South MacGregor, University of Houston, the O. S. T/Gulfgate Area, Mason Park, the East End, the Warehouse District, the Stadium and a return to a festive downtown.

To celebrate the ride finish, cyclists were treated to great live music, delicious fajita tacos, free beer and lots of other goodies for their achievement. The weather made for a day of sunshine and partially cloudy skies with just enough warmth for shorts and a light tan. Smiles and laughter were on most faces as they enjoyed their lunch on the cool lawn by the reflection pool. It was a great time for an MS-150 training ride.

Mark your calendars for next year's ride. You'll have the opportunity to get to know Houston better and join the fun.

Visit our website for more Guaranty Bank Tour de Houston photos at www.houstonbikeways.org.



Billal Mabizari smiles on his new bicycle. Billal was one of our BikeSmart handbook contest winners. He sports his new helmet too!



#### Rails to Trails in Houston

Two rail conversions will take place in Houston. The MKT/SP in the Heights and the Columbia Tap in the Third Ward. These projects create linear green space with a hike and bike trail for the enjoyment of all Houstonians. These transporation enhancement projects provide a direct connection to existing network bikeways further improving connectivity to vital areas such as these and other neighborhoods to the Texas Medical Center, Texas Southern University, the University of Houston, DeBakey High School, Minute Maid Stadium and many other education, work and living destinations. These transportation corridors broaden transportation options. They offer greater opportunities for a better quality of life and increase recreation in the city and beautification of the community.

#### **BikeSmart Contest Results**

Both of our BikeSmart Handbook contest winners were studiously taking their TAKS test on the day of the award presentation. Billal Mabizari, age 8, and Sam Roberts, age 13, won the BikeSmart handbook contest sponsored by the City of Houston and the Houston Chronicle.

Mr. Mabizari accepted the certificate presented by Mayor Pro-tem Carol Alvarado. She also presented Mr. Mabizari with a helmet and a \$500 gift certificate for Billal. Sam Roberts will also receive a certificate, and a helmet and \$500 gift certificate from Bike Barn, for a brand new bike.

To enter the contest, contestants needed to demonstrate their Houston bikeway knowledge by answering three bikeway-related questions on their entry form. Now that Billal and Sam will have a new bike and helmet, they will be able to apply the information learned in the BikeSmart handbook wherever they ride and we hope that you do too. (See page 4, BikeSmart)

particularly among other cyclists, walkers, runners and skaters or while participating in a group.

You will encounter pedestrians and runners on the trail, and pedestrians with strollers and with dogs. And people who enjoy walking in pairs or listening to a headset as well. All of these can create a hazard on the trail. Some users will cover the full width of the trail, will walk at a slow pace or not hear your approach.

It is important for pedestrians and cyclists to keep to the right. Small children should be within arms reach while on the path and should practice to keep to their right as well. Pets should be on a leash and walking to the right of their master.

When cycling towards another cyclist or pedestrian, call out, "passing" or "passing on your left" and proceed. This avoids startling the person on the trail and gives them the opportunity to move or remain to the right of the path avoiding a collision.

When cycling on the trail and preparing to stop, call out, "stopping", or signal with your hand pointing to the ground to warn cyclists and pedestrians behind you. If needing to make a longer stop, move to the right and off the path whenever possible.

Cyclists should reduce speed when approaching pedestrians and converging traffic.

When approaching a street crossing, stop and look both ways and towards oncoming traffic once again before crossing. Make eye contact. Watch traffic signals and cross when it is safe to do so. Use designated crossings when available.

Motorists can help too. When the traffic light is red, avoid stopping on the crosswalk or trail crossing area. Drivers should keep this space clear to allow cyclists and pedestrians safe space to cross when traffic signals allow them passage.

It is also a smart practice for motorists to watch for cyclists and pedestrians crossing the road when approaching a trail crossing. Reduce



your speed.

Another safe practice for motorists is to watch for cyclists when approaching an intersection, especially when you plan to turn. A cyclist can be riding on the right side of your traffic lane, approaching the intersection from oncoming traffic on your left, or crossing the intersection to your right. Always look left and right before making a turn or crossing the intersection.

Reduced speed helps increase visibility of cyclists and pedestrians. Another thing to keep in mind is that cyclists may ride faster than you think and pedestrians may walk slower than you expect. Take that into account when timing your actions. It is best to yield.

As trails increase in popularity and more people share the walking and cycling experience, you will notice that these rules of courtesy and protocol help improve everyone's experience by making it more enjoyable for all.



Houston Public Works engineers attend an inhouse national ASCE webcast seminar on Pedestrian Crossing Treatments. Sessions provide convenient ongoing education and participants may receive credits for ongoing education.

### Are You A City of Houston Employee?

Sign up for the employee bike fleet.

Find out how you can participate in the White Bike Program. All it takes is your commitment to ride, complete a bike education course, get your helmet on and roll. Find out more at (713) 837-0003 or visit www.houstonbikeways.org and click Houston Is On A Roll to find out about the White Bike Program.



#### **BikeSmart**

The BikeSmart handbook is available online. It offers safety tips for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists. It is available in the original English and Spanish versions. The full ww.houstonbikeways.org. available. Visit our website and click

#### City of Houston Bikeway Program

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